

THE

Massachusetts Literary Magazine.

VOL. XV.

OCTOBER, 1854.

No. 2

GOVERNMENT.

THE importance of a correct standard in all our calculations is obvious. Analogous to this, is the necessity of having a true conception of the essential nature of an institution, which is subject to changes corresponding with the varied manifestations of human character, as seen in the actions of men. The individual always has an ideal in his mind, and endeavors to make the results of his action approximate to it; and it is therefore, all important that the ideal itself should approximate as nearly as possible to truth.

The political relations of men have ever afforded some of the most interesting themes for consideration, both on account of the greatness of the principles involved and the practical bearing of the conclusions deduced. When we contemplate the individual man, we behold an embodied collection of ideas and principles. Power, happiness and moral obligation are the three grand elements in his nature that determine his action. But when we look no longer at man but men; when we lift our eyes from the one object and contemplate the multitude, we find these principles not simply a numerical aggregate, but as a set of signs and figures worked into a grand problem, the solution of which it would seemingly require more than human genius to effect. It

is not however, a mere speculation, which may serve as a plaything for the curious. It concerns both the individual and the public man, and its solution determines the destiny of the race in reference to their earthly interests. There are two theories respecting the nature of government, one or the other of which has been interwoven into the texture of almost every political creed. The one regards it as a social compact, the other as a divine institution. The first supposes men to form themselves into a body politic by a compromise of their several rights, each individual yielding up a portion of his natural liberty, in order to establish an independent power which shall protect him in the enjoyment of the remainder. It proceeds upon the principle that the interests of men are for the most part diverse, and government therefore a necessary evil. According to this view the weakest possible government consistent with individual safety is the best. It being a mere conventionality, self-interest is the great motive to its obedience. If this be its real nature, a science of government, as such, is impossible. There might be an ethics of contracts, but not of government, since it would be merely a particular kind of contract differing in no essential respect from any other. But in order that a thing may be the subject of a distinct science, it must have some generic difference which distinguishes it from everything-else.

The other view regards government as resting upon the authority of the Divine Will, as revealed in the nature and necessities of man as a social being. The fundamental idea in it is, that mankind are a family, and that the relations which constitute the foundation of government are natural and not the results of contract. The ultimate interests and duties of all men are the same, and cannot come in conflict; and government is therefore regarded as the combined power of the people, and results from an identity of nature and a community of interests and duties. Hence an individual yields up no natural right by becoming a member of society and subject to its authority. He is such already in virtue of his nature as a human being, and separates himself from it only by a violation of right.

There are two ways in which the correctness of this theory may

be tested. We may study the nature of man and inquire what we might expect government would be ; and then study government and endeavor to learn what it is. If the results of both investigations seem to justify the theory, we may conclude that it is the true one.

Wherever we find a form of power in nature, we find some object to which it is, or may be applied. And the fact that men from the similarity in their natures have a combined power, argues that this power is to be employed for some great purpose. We might suppose them to have been created very similar to what they are, and yet with some limitation which would forever prevent the union of their powers to any great extent. This was partially true at the time of the confusion of tongues and the dispersion of the race over the globe. And if men were destined by nature, to act with regard only to the individuality of each, this power would seem to be useless. But the moment we suppose man to be one and not many, we must believe that there is a community of interests between them ; and so far as their interests are common, this combined power may be employed for their advancement. Still more, if men be bound together by the ties of brotherhood, their moral obligations become pre-eminently important. Each individual sustains relations to his fellow-men, which he cannot disregard. He is bound to seek their welfare as well as his own. There must be a regard for the public good as well as for private interest.

Let us now look at the form and operations of government as we find them, and see what can be learned of its real nature. The first thing we observe is, that the ruling authority is not determined by arbitrary enactment simply, but depends upon the fact where the power resides. Intelligence and energy are the ruling principles among men, and wherever they are united in the highest degree, there is the real authority of the state. Where they are confined to a small number, the government will be an aristocracy or monarchy. Where they are diffused among the masses it will be a republic. This is true, even where appearances would seem to contradict it. The form of monarchy may be tolerated for various reasons, where the people feel that

they have the power to effect a change at any moment ; and we well know with what despotic sway even a republic may be ruled, when a man of great genius appears and takes part in the administration of its government. The same thing is shown still more strongly in the changes from monarchy to republicanism and the reverse. From this it appears that the question often raised, as to where the ruling power should be placed, in order to have a perfect government, is in a great measure an idle one. This is a thing already determined by nature and all our efforts to oppose her will be fruitless.

We may however, control her laws in this as in other cases. If we diffuse this intelligence among the masses, and awaken them to a just sense of their rights, we have in effect, established republicanism.

The next question is what is the nature of this power ? We reply that it is essentially the same, no matter what may be the form of government. It is the combined power of the individuals composing the state, manifesting itself sometimes in one form sometimes in another. There never was a form of government in which the people did not rule or consent to be ruled under the circumstances. It will be granted that in most cases they have the power to overthrow the existing form did they fight it out to the last ; but they usually prefer endurance to running so great a hazard. Men always act precisely as they choose, all things considered. We are not to say how they would act if the case were slightly different, but with the circumstances just as they are. Hence, wherever a form of government exists, we say it does so for the time being, by the consent of the people. It may be true that a very little is required to overthrow it. The form of government is the body, the will of the people the soul that animates it. A very little may separate them ; yet so long as the body gives manifestations of life, there is proof that the soul is still with it.

In the third place it is to be noticed that the strength of any government does not depend so much on the physical resources of the nation, as upon the community of interests and similarity of character between its inhabitants. It is not enough that there

be a great number of elements, but these must have such an affinity that they will readily combine. As society grows older the dependence of different sections upon one another increases. One has wants which another can supply; and their interests becoming common, they act in concert with regard to matters of general interest, and regulate their peculiar interests by some common standard. Then we frequently see a nation extending its territory in every direction, and this by means the most peaceful. So that the growth of empires is not due to the spirit of conquest alone, but to the disposition of men to arrange themselves under one government in proportion as their interests assimilate. Moreover, the intellectual and moral culture of a people, by which is generated a similarity of thought and feeling, tends still more strongly to unite them, even where their commercial interests seem to conflict. Such in fact, is the growth of the Law of Nations among the Christian powers of Europe.

We thus see that wherever a number of men live together they always have some form of government; that the ruling authority is always resident in the preponderance of power; that this power is in all cases the combined will of the people expressed in some form or other, and that its measure is the community of interest and feeling of the people. This is universally true. Are we to say then that government is an arbitrary agreement between individuals, a mere conventionality? Or is it not rather a form of power natural to the human race in virtue of its unity?

Let us now observe what phases this authority which we call the essence of government presents, corresponding with particular periods in the development of society. The form of government being that in which the real authority is embodied, when the latter is ready to take on a higher form of existence, a political metamorphosis takes place. Hence, when we contend so earnestly for the divine right of a government to protect itself, we must remember this does not apply to the form which is ready to be cast off. Of the absolute right of government to protect itself, there can be no doubt. But what is government? It is not a form of administration, but the will of the people embodied in it. But when that form has ceased to be the true exponent of

that will, it has no right of self protection. If it effects this the people have the right of revolution. This is one, generally admitted; but as there can be no conflict of absolute moral right, the other cannot exist. The same is true with regard to, the treatment due to a nation from kindred powers. They have the right to overthrow its government whenever this will meet with the consent of the people. The expediency of such a measure is a different question.

If, moreover, this theory of government be correct, how does it affect the subject of International Law? All that has been said with regard to a limited number of persons composing a state, will be true of the whole human race so far as the cases are parallel, that is so far as there is a community of interests and duties. Reversing the view then, we may first look at mankind as a whole, who undoubtedly have a combined power and authority superior to that of any single nation. Hence all questions of world-wide interest, as well as those concerning the rights of every individual man in virtue of his humanity, come within its jurisdiction. But mankind are separated into classes, the members of each of which have relations and interests peculiar to themselves; and these constitute the foundation for state governments.

It is true then that the highest human authority is the authority of mankind. There is such a thing as a world-power or world-government. It may be said that we see no such form of government in existence. It is there nevertheless, though in what may be called a latent state. As yet, circumstances have not been favorable to its taking such a definite form, nor indeed has occasion demanded it. A large number of questions coming properly under its jurisdiction are entrusted to the state governments, since they are most conveniently disposed of in this way. A state acts upon such a question according to its own judgment, and the world remaining silent, it has the tacit sanction of mankind. This view is still further confirmed by the modern growth of International Law, which had no existence among the Ancients as a matter of science. The only indications of anything like it, are special alliances between particular nations, and these the re-

sult of necessity rather than the acknowledgment of natural obligations between men. A state considered itself under no restraint on moral grounds, in regard to its treatment of nations with whom no contracts were made. But the development of the physical resources of nations gradually creates a natural dependence between them, and hence the increased number of such alliances with the growth of the world. At the same time the influence of Christianity, as well as that of all the unmixed elements of Civilization, is to give mankind clearer views of their relations and duties. It moreover tends to cultivate a similarity of thought and feeling, by setting up a great moral standard for all our motives to action. Now supposing the operation of these laws to continue in the development of society, may we not reasonably expect that the generally acknowledged though vaguely defined principles, by which nations are governed in their mutual intercourse, will ultimately take the form of positive law. We indeed see some intimation of it in the peace movement of the present day.

A remarkable feature in the history of government is the growing importance of its moral element. It was cradled in self-interest, but matures breathing the atmosphere of right. And it would seem that Providence has by marked means restrained the growth of a world-government until the moral nature of man should be sufficiently cultivated. For centuries since the confusion of tongues and the dispersion of the race, the great natural divisions of the earth have prevented any general union of human strength. But now, when Christianity is becoming the ruling principle among men, mountains and oceans are no longer barriers. It does indeed appear striking that science as a means of enlarging our power over nature, should make such rapid advances just at the time when we are learning to use that power properly. And it is possible that mankind may become one political as they are one physical and moral family. It is then that we may hope for a system of political economy which shall harmonize the commercial interests of different nations, an authority which shall make civil and religious liberty universal, and a government which shall apply the principles of truth and justice in the conservatism of all the earthly interests of man.

POETRY IMITATIVE.

It is apparent that a connection subsists between the liberal arts, beyond that which belongs to them as common pursuits of the same intelligence. But even whilst men have felt and declared them the natural employments of imaginative beings, who have faculties to discern, souls to relish and to welcome the presence of the beautiful, and thus to be imbued with a common spirit, and possessed of a common tendency; the distinctions which they have endeavored to draw from out, or by the side of, this resemblance have been vexed questions, matters of grave dispute, food for learned disquisitions, and themes for laborious trifling, even from the era of the great Father of Criticism. His dictum that all were mimetic arts differing only in subordinate circumstances, though separating them as widely as arts having any analogy can well be, is not accepted as characterizing them sufficiently. To remedy his imperfection of definition has been an end with all succeeding authors who have touched these matters, but with little success, as the wrangling of the schools even now, over this and that emendation sufficiently attests. Did any distinctive quality, worthy from its prominence to constitute the basis of a definition, belong to any one of these arts, (as for example, Poetry,) the presumption is, that centuries of search would have found it. Especially because the prize of immortality hung suspended as the glittering incentive to diligent investigation, and the reward of the happy discoverer. But if it appear from the nature of the arts themselves, that no such fundamental quality exists,—if it appear that his definition absorbs the vital principle on which the arts are based, the assertions of the old Greek must hold good, though it may mortify our pride that the “native strength of reason” should progress so slowly. Imitation, as ordinarily defined, is the formation of a duplicate,—better, *the reproduction of relations*. The seeming narrowness of this definition, in that it apparently excludes from consideration in its application to the arts mentioned, those great classes of qualities, attributes, &c., which make up so great

a part of the material of artistic productions, vanishes when we call to mind what every one's experience will afford instances of, that these qualities and attributes being abstractions, concerning which it is difficult to obtain other than that vagueness of conception which attaches to universals, must be represented to the mind by something more tangible, more easily conceived, which holds an intimate connection with them, and by virtue of which, possesses the power of readily introducing and strongly impressing them. Of this class, is either some embodiment, in a visible form, of the particular abstractions, or something to which they are connected by a conditional necessity. A direct embodiment has the objections of not being universally attainable and not always applicable, as when the instrument of imitation is the immaterial one of language. In this latter case, the sole resource and a most efficient one, is the employment of those relations of which the qualities are necessary concomitants or which, by association, possess the power of inspiring, however obliquely, the notion desired. This is no strange nor unwarranted artifice. Any one can easily convince himself, by reflection on the operations of his own mind, that it is among the most common resorts to which we are driven by the limitations set to our mental powers. Few in fact, are the truths, of which we have definite knowledge, derived from direct contemplation. Their paucity and insignificance are the most humbling proofs of our littleness. These relations are of two kinds, those which subsist between the parts and attributes of the same object, and those between individuals of a class, and the parts of the system of the universe. To the former is due the existence and symmetry of the individual, to the latter the connection everywhere visible in the material and immaterial worlds. These relations or laws of *adaptation* and *connection*, form the sum of what we know as truth, and in their various aspects are the common study of the man of Science, the Painter and the Poet. Instruction however is the end proposed by the philosopher; pleasure and in a secondary degree profit the common aim of the painter and the poet. They therefore view these relations, or such of them as have reference to the

faculties they mean to address, in quite a different spirit. Whilst the former, intent only on convincing and informing, seeks those only which can be made available before the tribunal at which the reason sits in judgment, the latter plead in another court. They profess to please the taste, entertain the imagination, refine the passion, interest and chasten the feelings. To attain this fourfold end, (or if we regard the last two elements as necessary consequences of the former, this two fold end,) the artists hold up to our physical and mental views respectively, the embodiments of those relations which appeal to the taste and imagination, and implicitly rely on their adaptation to our mental and moral constitution, on the eternal fitness existing between the faculties of that immaterial essence we call mind, and the laws impressed on the universe by the Great Intelligence, from which that mind is, as it were, an emanation; on the direct impress of the laws, and the indirect effects of association, to work out the wished-for consummation. By the faithful reproduction of such accordant laws the desired results are as certainly attained, as without such faithfulness, the most labored efforts prove lamentable failures in impressing and delighting the imagination or in affecting the heart. A falsity, a relation mistaken or created for a purpose is invested from the first with but limited credit; when detected or exposed, loses its doubtful power in conducing to the end, and reacts on him who employed it as on the work of which it formed a part. Truth, and truth only is the effective theme of the poet, the truths of nature and the truths of life, the thousand fold relations binding man to himself, to his fellows, the universe and God, are the legitimate subjects of his pen. As Juvenal enumerates the objects of his satire :

Quidquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas,
Gaudia, discursus—

the poet may in part number the subjects of his verse. Beyond these, earth, air and heaven, the world visible, and the world invisible, all of time and the mysteries of eternity, all with which man holds relations, or whose relations external and internal he discerns, pay tribute to the poetic muse. But whilst thus

extensive the field of the poet's labors and varied the sources whence come his materials, one end he proposes to himself,—to please the taste, enliven and enchant the imagination. As this is also the painter's aim, so is his field extensive and his materials varied. True, they are not commensurate with those of the former. His instruments of imitation though often more efficient than those of the other, when applicable, yet cannot embody the same classes of relations. Those only of outward form and appearances, transferable to canvass, claim his skill; while the poet at whose command is another, more subtle and more extensive array of instruments, language, embodies at once and directly conveys those others of immaterial things which the former could not convey or but feebly through association. And conversely the pencil oftentimes represents that which the pen cannot. Yet between these there is a wide field of common ground as boundless as the universe. Two bonds are therefore established between the two artists, a community of subjects, and a community of objects.

Still further do they agree, in that their works naturally divide themselves into the same three classes; imitations of actual existences; new combination of actual forms into consistent idealities, and pure creatures or downright fiction. Assuming it as evident that in the first class, the arts are as Aristotle calls them, imitative, it can further be easily shown that in the others which confessedly comprise most of the noblest works in either art the object aimed at is still the same. The supposed objector will himself admit that there is an original difference in the powers which these relations exert in respect of the faculties which the artists immediately address, and that by reason of this difference some are better suited to the inspiration of pleasure than others. This limitation of ready-formed and constituted subjects of the pen and pencil, added to the mind's innate love of attempting what it perceives to be the highest exercise of intelligence, namely, creation, it is, which impels the artist of either kind to venture on this hazardous, but if successful, ennobling trial. Aware, therefore, of this fundamental disparity in the efficiency of his instruments, the true artist seeks

to fill his mind with the most tasteful, to make them the pabulum of his imaginative life, and the material of his works. He is thus confident that his productions, drawn from sources themselves acceptable, if framed, not as the Mermaid of the Pisos, but accordingly to "the law of the work;" cannot fail to recommend themselves to all beholders. The maiden of Zeuxis, whose charms were drawn from six of earth's fairest, was not less an imitation than if it had been a faithful copy of an existing angel. These laws moreover, which the poet observes to underlie all existing things, to pervade the life of men, controlling feeling, emotion, thought, desire, motive and act, ordained as they were, and impressed by an intelligent cause who was when we were not, are as independent of what exhibits them as the mathematical truth of the diagram which exhibits it, and as capable of transference. The separation of such, and recombination into consistent idealities, under the restriction mentioned above is the highest effort of genius. It is to him who does this that the Roman critic offers the advice,

Si audes
Personam formare novam, servetur ad inum
Qualis ab incepto processerit aut sibi constet.

That is, if the poet venture upon fiction, let him so observe the laws of *adaptation* (aut &c.) and those of *connection* (qualis &c.) that the reader may feel the analogy and confess the resemblance to what he sees in life, learns from nature or experiences in the throbbing pulsations of his innermost heart. This cognition, often intuitive, often eluding attempts to justify it, is nevertheless the most convincing evidence, unimpeachable because unerring, of the faithfulness of the artist; the trustworthy proof of his claims to the title of poet. But it is more, it is the establishment of a bond which connects these phantasms of the imagination, "products of a disordered brain" as some have called them, with the more sober subjects of the pen, in that it testifies to their identity as reproductions of impressed law. Wherefore we, in fine conclude that arts having a common basis, bearing themselves subjectively to the same classes of objects, addressing the same faculties for the attainment of the same end,

do and can differ only in such subordinate circumstances (and even in them, as for example in the instruments they employ, there is close coincidence in effect, we speaking of a word-painting and a speaking picture, of portraying a scene and an emotion, &c., indifferently,) that we cannot but despair of finding any feature, belonging to one, of sufficient prominence to make it worthy of being the ground of a new definition. Hence therefore, let the Peripatetic still call poetry an imitative art. It is possible indeed to express the same idea in other words, a cheap and oftentimes efficient way of obtaining credit for originality. Poetry, therefore, may be defined to be the verbal embodiment of apposite truth, in such of its relations as are fit subjects for the exercise of the taste and imagination, excipients of passion and feeling.

SYPHAX.

LIFE.

"LIFE," is a term of most comprehensive signification, and, in consequence, a proportionate degree of vagueness has ever attended any attempt to define it. It embraces in its universal application (thus seeming to identify them) principles and conditions operating upon matter, which in themselves have evidently no community of nature, possessing neither the same origin nor performing like functions. This vagueness of definition then, with the voluminous controversies which have occupied the time and attention of philosophers and naturalists for so long; and which seems as far now from any definite conclusion as when commenced, would appear to arise from a desire, (based on the foregone conclusion that the same term cannot be employed to designate different existences,) to reconcile and refer to the same source as their joint and common origin, principles entirely diverse in their nature. It will probably best suit our purposes in this essay, to resolve the general term *life*

into its constituent parts or special forms, viz : of physical, intellectual, and moral life, or the lives respectively of the body, the mind, and the soul, each being considered as distinct from, and independent of either of the others. Having thus clearly, at the outset, avowed our disbelief in the identity of the forces producing this state of life in these distinct instances, we may perhaps be allowed in our discussion of the lowest form under which the phenomenon presents itself, or physical life, to adopt the theory of the materialists without incurring any of the odium that has of late attached itself to the philosophers of that school, and which arises solely, as we think, from their seeking to extend a most excellent theory beyond its proper limits, to make it account for the unaccountable, by the aid of its feeble glimmer to peer through the veil with which the All-Wise God has enshrouded the deep mysteries of creation.

That such a course must lead to the black abyss of infidelity is inevitable. And yet, many have unhesitatingly pursued it, preferring the revelations afforded by the momentary glare of such meteors as the agitated and troubled medium of their finite reason is continually generating, to the mild and steady light that descends from higher and purer regions.

This has been a fatal Cleopatra for whom many powerful minds have lost the world and heaven, and been content to lose them. Restricted to the proper sphere however, and applied exclusively to the elucidation of the phenomena of purely physical life, as we propose here to employ it, this taper which flickered so feebly on the great infinite, becomes a powerful auxiliary to the cause of science. According to our theory then, the process undergone in the organization of matter, necessitates the evolution of a certain principle by virtue of which the several organs are rendered capable of performing their appointed functions ; this principle and the resultant faculty we designate by the term *physical life*. It has been defined by Baron Cuvier to be "the property possessed by certain corporeal combinations of continuing for a time under one determined form by attracting incessantly from without, and identifying with the matter of their own compositions, particles

of extraneous substances, and by rendering to the surrounding elements portions of their own."

The action of this living principle is constant, more or less rapid, more or less complicated, according to the nature of the physical structure or the degree of perfection attained in the organism. Since life pre-supposes organization it will necessarily be wanting to inorganic matter, and hence its presence or absence marks the class to which any given portion of material existence is to be referred. It then forms the distinctive difference between organic or animate, and inorganic or inanimate existence, the latter being such as was originally without life or properly inorganic, or such as being originally organic once possessed the principle, but lost it at the moment of death, or, which is the same thing, of incipient disorganization. A living body then differs from one which is not, in the possession of this vital motion, by means of which its component parts are restrained from separation and preserved in a state of union. As soon as this movement ceases, to return no more, the body dies, and the material elements of which it is composed becoming immediately subject to their ordinary chemical affinities dissolve into inorganic atoms with greater or less rapidity. This then is *physical life*. Consisting of nothing more than the mere capacity of vegetation it is shared in common by all organized substances whether animal or vegetable, in a degree proportionate to the degree of perfection attained in the organism, united to complexity of parts, and operating in any given instance in the manner demanded by the peculiar physical structure of that species.

Taking leave here of this form of the general principle of "life," we at the same point part company with the "materialist" theory, which would else intrude itself beyond the bounds of matter into the kingdom of mind, in any attempt to elucidate whose phenomena it would present the ludicrous spectacle of a vain-glorious pigmy contending with a nation of giants.

Intellectual life, considered in its widest sense, distinguishes the animal from the vegetable creation; the former possessing, (superadded to the common property of vegetation), the power

of locomotion, together with sensation, reason, and reflection. This *increase* of life, unlike the *physical form*, does not owe its origin in any degree to organization, being entirely distinct from, and totally independent of it; but is a pure gift of God, bestowed for some inscrutable purpose upon all the creatures of His hand, from the loftiest arch-angel to the tiniest animalcule, in a degree proportionate to the importance of the part assigned each intermediate species in the out-working of the grand drama of Creation. Advancing a step higher up the scale of being we find the animal kingdom divided, and *man* who thus far has been only "*primus inter pares*" among the living things of earth, is elevated to a dignity far exceeding that of the "*beasts that perish*" by the possession of an immortal principle of inner life that shows him related to a superior being, even his Maker and Preserver. This is the religious element of man's nature, which "*breathed into his nostrils,*" constituted him "*a living soul.*" Unlike the physical and intellectual life he enjoys in conjunction with it, this moral existence shall not pass away when he is done with earth, but shall subsist forever, unimpaired by the mutations of his corporeal frame, and undestroyed by the wreck of the material universe.

Man then we have seen to be a compendium of these three kinds of life. In him is found the perfection of creation. He fills the wide hiatus, that in his absence would exist, between the natural and the uncreate spiritual world. Possessing the supreme power on earth among the creatures that surround him, he is also made conscious, by the intuition of his superior religious nature, that his ultimate destination is Heaven. Standing upon earth, and to all appearance of it, his head rises far above the fixed stars. A golden chain connected with the very throne of God, binding Heaven to Earth, and Earth to Heaven. A Jacob's ladder reaching to Heaven, upon which the ministers of God continually descend and ascend. For is not earth cursed for his sake? and for his sake it is blessed.

Seeing then the important place *man* occupies in the economy of creation, how the rest of the universe of whatever order or degree, is but of secondary importance compared with

him,—nay, that all else exists, but to subserve the purposes of his individual destiny, it becomes us to enquire into the wherefore of this prominence thus accorded this one of God's creatures over all others; the aim and object had in view in endowing him with this superior existence. In discussing this division of our subject, we shall confine ourselves to the consideration of that species of life which constitutes man pre-eminently what he is, the peculiarly distinguishing feature marking him out as a partaker of everlasting life hereafter, since this being in the ratio of infinity to one, compared in its importance with the lower forms, it is universally as an immortal principle that life is treated of in the discussion of man. In this connection however, we would take occasion to remark, that while we omit the consideration of the inferior forms in this division of our essay, we would not be understood as denying any of the importance to the share they contribute in forming "the life of man;" since indeed, moral life could not exist save in conjunction with intellectual, and the organization producing the state of physical life, is necessary as a theatre for the action of mind. They are therefore in some sense dependent one upon the other, in the combination in which we here find them, but the moral nature being as we have before affirmed, so infinitely superior as entirely to absorb all consideration of the others in its own importance; we would appear to derogate from the dignity of the former, to compare its office and part in the out-working of the divine purpose in the creation of man, with that of the latter, however much deference we may at the same time accord to them.

Considering man then, as a morally responsible being, we are to enquire whence he comes, and whither he goes. Moses in his brief chronicle of the Creation, furnishes us no clue to the *final* design of the Almighty, in creating man: God said, "let us make man in our own image, after our own likeness"; he is silent as to the purpose, the object to be attained, by this exertion of His creative power; nor can this final cause be discerned by observation of the life that is continually going on around us. Man has basely fallen from the high estate in which he was created, and the ruin

and pollution with which he has covered himself in consequence, have completely obscured the divinity of his nature, leaving nought apparent but the "sensual, devilish"; and the conclusion to which our finite reason would most naturally lead us, on the contemplation of the visible outward appearance man presents, would prove unworthy of an omnipotent God. Vague, unsatisfying speculation then, is all that is left us. We are told that there was war in Heaven, that pride and self-sufficiency had insinuated themselves within even those holy precincts, and the avenging spear of Ithuriel had hurled from their "great white thrones," the rebellious archangel, and his deceived confederates. The thrones they left vacant, were to be filled; then were strains wanting to complete the harmony of Heaven's choral song which now grated harshly upon the Eternal ear!

May it not have been to supply these empty thrones, to restore the lost notes that once swelled out in adoring anthems, that man was created an immortal spirit, placed upon this probationary theatre, led through fire, and through water, refined as gold is refined, purified from dross, and thus prepared for entering upon the lost glories of the fallen angels? Or it may be, that there is a strong necessity embodied in the Divine nature, impelling the incessant activity and exercise of the creative power; and that our race is but one of a series, that originating in the eternity of the past, is to extend throughout the unending cycles of the future; affording inmates of those blest abodes which lie buried in the bosom of illimitable space. Yet though the ultimate aim and purpose of the creation is veiled in mystery from mortal eye, the immediate objects, and idea of the existence with which man is clothed, so far as he himself is concerned in its fulfilment, is plainly taught by the tendencies of all the revelations, made by the Creator to his creatures.

The chief object that man is to know, as the aim of his life is "the glory of God"; on the devotion of himself to this end, depends his own temporal and eternal happiness.

The grand idea of human life then, consists in devising and putting in constant practice, such a code of action, as shall, by regulating, and guiding the whole system of our affections and

powers, preserve each in its proper sphere and due subordination to the rest, and conduct us to this proper end of our being; the highest perfection, dignity and happiness of our own nature, and through this the widest display of the glory of our Creator. Ample directions for the formation of such a rule of conduct are afforded us, and it is only by strictly observing the same that we shall attain to the degree of beatitude promised by the heathen poet,

“— uno minor cris Jove, dices,

Liber, honoratus, pulcher Rex denique Regum.”

“C. K.”

THE SILVER BELL OF VELMICH.*

A RHINE LEGEND.

Where Rhinewein flows from purple grape,
Where verdure crowns the swelling hills;
Where faintly seen, the melting shape
Of distant mountains blueely fills
The landscape on each side, and “like a line
Of silver thread upon an emerald cloth,” creeps on
Between his viny banks, the “song-crowned” Rhine:
There is upreared, upon a barren crag,
A ruined garison.
There dwelt stern Falkenstein,
There waved his hated flag.
The owl now hoots from the crumbling tower,
The ivy twines upon the wall;
There’s a gypsey den in my lady’s bower,
A cypress grows in the dining hall.
There’s a ban upon that Castle tall;
A ban that dates from the midnight hour
When the Burgrave seized St. Winifred’s bell,
And hurled it down the Castle well.
“I’ll have that bell,” cried the baron bold;
“I’ll change its silver into gold;
Tell not to me your priest-craft tale:

* This legend is briefly told by M. Victor Hugo in his work on the Rhine.

I've heard too many curses in my time
To dread yon Prior's state,
And empty imprecations, or grow pale
At what you call "a sacrilegious crime."
Go, Fritz, and fetch the silver bell."
The bell is brought. Its tolling chime,
As it was borne along, spake solemnly a knell
Of fearful warning. Whispering as they go,
The varlets say "*It* never rings but at the death
Of a Falkenstein—" and so—and so,
They mutter frowningly in lowest-breath.
They set the bell in the court-yard down,—
The Burgrave meets them with a frown.
"Why tolled ye thus yon precious bell?
Think ye to ring *my* final knell?
Beware, or by the Lord of Hell,
It shall another story tell,
Of varlets hung from a Castle keep,
Sent before, the road to sweep,
And warn the devils that Falkenstein
Hath thought their worthy band to join
And test Prince Satan's discipline—
Now by St. Dame! what have we here!"
The Abbey Prior, with air severe,
Clad in his sacred robes—on either side
An aged, white-robed chorister,
Bearing aloft a cross, appear.
"How now, Sir Priest, what 'ventful tide
Of strange mishaps doth bring thee here?
'Tis long since chorister or monk
Has passed this castle gate. Not since our priest—
(The jolly soul was always drunk.)
When at a boisterous feast,
Drank with Fritz for a buxom maiden,
And died with too much Rhine-wein laden.
Nay, nay, Sir Prior, I do not like thy savor.
Come, say thy say, and leave us—as a favor."
"Thou impious wassailer! how can'st thou dare
Thus rob the holy Church. Thou infidel
And knight foresworn! This night thou'lt pluck thy hair,
And yell, and groan in horrible despair,
At one slight foretaste of thy coming Hell.
Yield to me this holy bell,
Ere it ring thy final knell,
Ere thou dost my life compel

To breathe on thee the Church's curse.
What robs thy soul of every hope
That"— The baron shouts with passion hoarse,
"Avaunt thou shaven misery."
And draws his trusty sword.
"No, no. I'll take him at his word.
Ho Fritz, fetch here a rope.
There, bind the rascal priest. What! This to *me!*
Accursed hound! then *this*, and *this* to thee!"
And the fierce Burgrave smites the vassal low,
Cleft to the chin, with that repeated blow.
Then doth he seize upon the trembling friar,
Then doth he bind him to the cherished bell,
And with a fiendish laugh of rabid ire,
Doth shove them down into the Castle well.
Full forty feet the murdered Churchman fell,
Bound hand and foot unto his silver bell.
And from that pit there came one dying yell,—
Then all was still. The Choristers
Fled fast away, and were the messengers
That told the Prior's fate. The Baron thrust
His dead serf's corse into the well, exclaiming 'dust to dust.'
"Come here, ye dogs. Fill up this hole
With earth and stone. We'll shortly see
If that accursed bell will toll
When death shall lay a claim on me."
'Tis done. In wassail glee,
In feast and wine, the Burgrave seeks
To drown the voice that ever speaks.

II.

Night, with her solemn stillness, walketh in,
Night, shelterer of crime, and guard of sin,
Night, high Lady Queen of rest,
To sufferer, to grief oppressed;
Whose wakeful hours, whose awful still
Are the curse of remorseful doers of ill.
Night o'er Velmich on the Rhine
Brings not her bliss to Falkenstein.
For the brows of the Baron stern
With a scorching fever burn.
Spectres of his sinful past,
Come with the swiftness of storm-blast,
Come a terrible forecast
Of a doom to death, most fearfully vast.

'Twas in November's gloomy tide,
 The howling storm-winds shook the tower;
 A grey-browed leech sat close beside
 His fevered Lord at midnight hour.
 And swift the fierce wind hurtled by,
 Wildly fraught with the dismal cry
 Of an owl that whooped from a neighboring tree,
 In monotone, right piteously.
 But see, what wakes my Lord!
 Why grasps he thus for his absent sword!
 What frightful spectre of the night
 Thus riseth on his startled sight!
 Lulled the wind, and ceased the owl,
 The hound in the court yard paused in his howl.
 Then on the stillness of the night—
 As breaks the storm-cloud's vivid light
 Upon the darkness; showing all around
 The surf-beat reef that doth perhaps surround
 Some laboring ship whose crew their port had neared,
 And thought their voyage o'er. Lo! was heard
 The clear-toned tollings of the fatal bell,
 Ringing a long and solemn knell.
 "Oh, Gottfried, take my hand in thine.
 Dost hear it? Hark, it tolls again.
 Oh holy virgin! to thy shrine
 I vow a candlestick of graven gold,
 If I but live. Oh agony! The pain
 Throbs through every sluggish vein.
 "Gottfried, thy hand—that cursed priest—I'm cold."
 He sank upon his bed;
 And nevermore did Falkenstein,
 The robber-knight of wild old Rhine,
 Uplift his haughty head.

* * * * *

Since then those walls have crumbled fast;
 Those halls have lost their gorgeous state,
 The day of Velmich's might is past,
 And ruin rules, a ruthless potentate,
 O'er wall and hall and lofty castle gate.
 At the annual return of that fatal day
 When the Baron died (the peasants say)
 Beneath the tower, while midnight mass is singing,
 Is heard, in measured tones, a death-knell ringing.
 And this is the legend the peasants tell
 Of old St. Winifred's Silver Bell.

WORDSWORTH.

"One impulse, from a vernal wood,
Could teach him more of man,
Of moral evil, and of good ;"
Than all the sages can.

OF the many writers who have strengthened language, by infusing into it the power and flexibleness of Genius, no one is more worthy of admiration than WORDSWORTH. While Milton imparted the melody of Helicon to his native tongue, Wordsworth, in the purity of the Saxon style, uttered thoughts which must live as long as eminent merit attracts the eye of men. Both were reformers awakening old truths, which were slumbering beneath the servile sentiments of their respective ages ; both yearned for the political and social regeneration of man ; but the former was too radical,—the latter too peculiar,—both were too original either to acquire popularity or to work a speedy reform of popular evils. Milton dwelt in his own "upper air" and attempted to elevate man to it ; Wordsworth came down to the common level and handled familiar topics in a familiar style. While the former sung about the warrings of angels,—the latter wept over the warrings of men. Wordsworth does not touch the feelings of men with the skill of Shakspeare ; but the truthfulness of his nature beams from every line of his productions. He beat out a new path, suited to himself rather than to those who were to read his productions. It seems to have never entered his mind that, in a servile age, men must walk in the light of previous writers, and blunder among errors even when conscious of their existence. Wordsworth considered the wants and not the wishes of his readers. He may have seen that the ultimate success of an author depends upon his sentiments, and not merely upon those to whom they are immediately addressed ; but if ignorant of this, he was too firm to be influenced by anything foreign to his true nature. There was little sympathy between him and his countrymen, although purer patriot never lived, and more earnest efforts were never put forth by loyal subject, to

heighten the tone of English sentiment and feeling. It was this coldness to prevalent customs that rendered Wordsworth unpopular among his countrymen. Neither fashion nor the force of great minds could induce him to adopt the enchanting dogmas of an impure and skeptical philosophy. His independent spirit cringed not before the opinions of the living or the teachings of the dead. Books contained little of interest for Wordsworth, and were seldom handled by him. This did not arise from apathy or disregard for knowledge, but from an earnest love of truth unencumbered by the comments of others. Whether this aversion to Literature be a fault or a virtue in Wordsworth is questionable. His simplicity might have been destroyed by such learning as Milton's, and the naturalness of his works have been lost in the conventional forms of learned men. However well he might have succeeded, if his fine passages had emanated from the cloister, we would ascribe to the culture of his intellect, what is but the natural effusion of Genius. In studying what man had said, he might have lost sight of what man had done. It is no doubt dangerous, as it is novel, to separate one's self from the influence of extrinsic agencies. Few have ever attempted to counteract their social tendencies in order to contemplate only two ideas,—the visible and invisible God, and man's capacities and wants; and it was an earnest of Wordsworth's great power that he relied so completely on himself, regardless of the sayings and scoffings of the world. In fact, whenever we behold a man wandering like a lone spirit, with few close affinities for men, but an ardent lover of man; communing with himself and with nature, we may be sure that his mission is high, and that his genius will brighten some untrodden path.

Wordsworth strove to comprise all grades of society in the sweep of his practised eye, and none from the lordliest to the humblest escaped his scrutiny. Man as he was, man as he is, and man as he should be, occupied his thoughts. To elevate him to his former dignity was his great aim; and it was a lofty one. Hence his poetry is not marked by the gorgeousness of an ideal splendor, nor by the hollow rhythm which obtains to this day. It is sometimes loaded with the sublimest conceptions, and again

glitter with most sparkling jewels. Like the stream, it lingers alike around the hut of poverty, and the rock-built castle of power. Bluntness characterizes some of his poems; but his earnest desire to elevate the most menial vocation to respectable notice, should excuse occasional coarseness. Wordsworth regarded every position in life, from the highest to the lowest, with peculiar interest, because, a human soul capable of living with God, filled it. Milton soared among the stars and listened to their music, or entered the bowers of Eden and contemplated man as he used to be—Godlike. Dante wandered through the circles of hell, viewing man as he may be—fiendlike. Poets have run from one extreme to the other, bodying forth shapes of unnatural perfectness or a shocking deformity; but Wordsworth's chief study was man as he is—his ancient loveliness marred. Had he visited Italy, the Parthenon and St. Peter's would have occupied little of his thoughts, but he would have wept over Italy decayed—over the crushing pomps of Roman Catholicism.

Wordsworth's poetry is often philosophical. Accustomed to commune with his own spirit, he sounded to their depths the mysteries of humanity. His love of right and marvelous insight into character fitted him for the exposition of philosophical truth; hence his unpopularity among the frivolous, who are ravished with the voluptuousness of Moore and the licentiousness of Byron. His writings are not gloomy, but are remarkable for their sweetness,—while every line sparkles with some gem of thought, plucked from the depths of his own clear brain. The fact is, that Wordsworth was thoughtful and original, and therefore, like Carlyle, is unpopular.

• Wordsworth derived more power from the natural world than any of the English poets. Nature in all her variety presented forms of loveliness in which he might trace the finger of Deity. From the dew-drop glittering in the sunlight, to the largest orb circling the sun in his glory, there shone out, upon the truthful soul of Wordsworth, the beauty of God manifest in his creations.

Wordsworth's political feelings were warm but liberal, and yet Burke himself never entertained a more deadly antipathy to France than did our poet-philosopher. This hatred was not based upon

the relations existing between England and her rival, but upon the repulsiveness of the French character to his natural temperament. In France he beheld what was most offensive to him, a gilded bauble, a glittering mass, without the stability of a firm character, or the pulse of a real life. Among nations whose sinews had hardened into maturity, France was but a fretting child, charmed with every novelty and idolizing her rulers as mere playthings that soon cloyed and were abandoned. He who found lamentable imperfections in the English character,—who took chief delight in the *dignity* of man; could not be expected to accommodate himself to the follies of gay France. It should be remembered that Wordsworth was the respecter of human liberty and could view only with horror any attempts to encroach upon it

Whoever deprived man of his sacred rights, could expect little sympathy from one, whose energies were on fire at the least semblance of tyranny. In this spirit did he write these lines, which, if his only effort, are enough to enshrine “the immortal front” of him.

“Never may from our souls this truth repent,
That an accursed thing it is to gaze
On prosperous tyrants, with a dazzled eye.”

This and similar passages will go along with the ages, and long after this and succeeding generations shall have gone down to “darkness and the worm,” they will shine in the “clear upper sky,” like stars sentinelling heaven’s arch-way. Other poets will be born to hew out new paths to renown, but while there are good men to admire merit, and while the principles of taste rest on a proper basis, the name of *Wordsworth* will loom high towards it kindred heaven.

L.

EGYPT.

MYSTERY ever shrouds God's Providences. At one time they appear partially obscured ; at another, deeply indented, and as we observe and reflect upon their appearance thus presented to our notice, we are filled with amazement and awe at the manifestations of His greatness and power, so often displayed in the past of nations. In no instance do we see more clearly the workings of God's providence, and governance, than in the progress of events in that glorious epoch which has given to Egypt the justly earned and proudly welcomed title of "*the cradle of letters.*" Fore-ordained of God to be the spring from whence should flow the unnumbered streams of knowledge when He should give the word, Egypt stood in proud consciousness of the value of the gift she was about to bestow upon the world ; a gift, than which all others sink into insignificance ; for it was, and is the agent of His Justice, and His Mercy. In her hand she held the key, the priceless key, which should unlock the flood gates of natural and revealed Truth, and water the parched and thirsting Earth with its glad, refreshing moisture : and now the time of its bestowment had fully come. The World, sunk in ignorance, and its concomitant superstition, presented a picture, sublime in its intensity of wretchedness. But a second time "God said, let there be light ! and light was."

This period marked the first mighty step toward Minerva's golden throne, where the dark-eyed goddess sat, holding in her hand, crowns of never fading myrtle and bay, to award the exultant victor. Happy he, who should win a crown ; for amidst the dark, glossy foliage, could be traced the startling words, Immortality awaits thee. Long she remained thus, in her mighty giant strength : amid the wreck and ruin of nations, she stood unmoved. But the cloud which foreshadowed her destruction had already begun to darken the horizon of her prosperity. Upon her mighty pyramids, her towering obelisks, and magnificent temples of Art and Literature, decay was written. Thebes with her hundred gates of solid brass, "must mourn her desolation in sackcloth and ashes." The judgment of God, through the prophet Jere-

miah had gone out against it, "and none could stay its progress." "The burden of Egypt," heavy as it was, must be borne. "And the spirit of Egypt must fail, in the day of trouble." In that day must Egypt be like unto women, and be afraid and fear, because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shaketh over it; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and when all her helpers shall be destroyed.

There is something mournful in the survey of the past history of Egypt; great she has been, among nations, nought she is.

And fearfully were these judgments executed. Desolation, complete, and terrible in its silence, reigns where once echoed the busied throng. Upon the thrones of her princes, and the places of her mighty men, rests the pall of death. Nor does the star of Hope shed a single ray of light, through the thick cloud that enwraps her remains. No resurrection awaits her lifeless corse, to revivify the stiffened members and clothe them anew with life and vigor. Egypt has fallen: for her transgressions, the wrath of God abideth on it. What she was, can be traced in letters of marble and granite, of brass and iron. Though Egypt has become a byword among nations, and her children have been dispersed throughout the world before the fierce whirlwind of the wrath of God, as chaff before the tornado's blast; the monuments of her genius, imperceptibly yet surely wasting away under the corroding tooth of time, still bear witness of the gigantic skill that planned, and the consummate skill that executed them. Mournful indeed is the story they tell, a life story, a heart story it is, with a mournful sequel. The crumbling pyramids speak to us of the power and resources of their builders, but conclude with the warning, that even the greatness of the Pharaoh's is unable to preserve to them their memory, and Cleopatra's needles point where only immortality is found.

The history of this once mighty, but now fallen nation, is not without a lesson which should be firmly fixed in the mind of every true lover of his country. The causes which led to her decline, the conduct both of her rulers, and her ruled; are all subjects which amply repay the closest investigation, and fur-

nish abundant material for philosophical inquiry, and practical application. But a few years, comparatively, have elapsed since the sceptre wielded by the Pharaohs, was extended over a vast and populous empire. The entire East, at the time of the Pharaohs, acknowledged her supremacy, while its treasures filled her treasury. Governed by monarchs, distinguished for their wisdom and power, the most sagacious foresight could see nothing in the future of Egypt, but continued prosperity and peace. The government was not a despotism in its strict sense under Sesostris, the mightiest of the Egyptian monarchs, nor indeed, many years later under the Ptolemies; to which history bears witness. And under Ptolemy Philadelphus, Egypt acquired a stand in literature, which may well be entitled the Augustan Age of the East. Among other eminent services that he has rendered the world, the fact of his causing the Septuagint translation of the old Testament, is sufficient to render his name pre-eminent as a patron of learning, and as a lover of literary pursuits. One great aim of their political economy, however, laid the foundation of their ultimate ruin; it was the union of church and state. The hierarchy of the priest hood exercised supreme control over both the political and civil condition of the people. Their influence was extended over the most momentous, as well as the most trivial affairs of the empire. Kings dared not neglect the requisitions of the priesthood; and as their system of religious belief was essentially corrupt, and debasing in its tendency; it is evident, that the nation must sink with a religion so intimately connected with it. Wherever Church and State are indissolubly connected, however correct the religious belief may be, in its principle, the union will invariably be disastrous in its consequences; and if the principles of the church are based on error, the downfall is materially hastened. 'Twas so with Egypt. Another element in her government, of equal, if not greater importance, that contributed largely toward reducing her to the condition in which she now lies, was her total ignorance of the true God. No nation, however great, can exist and prosper, without the elements of Christianity in her organization. It is not necessary that these elements should be incorporated with

the body politic to secure a nation's stability. But it is the union of church and people. In this is the safeguard, and with this is the assurance of the prosperity of a nation.

We may also mention that knowledge as the exclusive privilege of the priesthood, was another cause of the decline and fall of the Egyptian empire. The learning of the Egyptian priesthood was exceedingly extensive. In them were combined the offices of judge, soothsayer, sculptor, architect, physician, and in fact every department of scientific and legal, as well as ecclesiastical learning. The value of their discoveries in science, more especially in that branch, to which they gave the closest attention, Astronomy,—is truly great: but this resulted not from their fondness for this branch of scientific study, in itself; but, because Astronomy, or more definitely, Astrology, was closely connected with their pursuits. Agriculture to them, was the most important part of their domestic economy. The products of the earth had acquired a degree of sacredness that was increased by the supposed influence that was exerted over them by the heavenly bodies. And history reports that the priest alone had the right to consult the stars with respect to their probable favorableness or unfavorableness to agricultural operations. Hence it may be truly said that the priests ruled the nation. Experience has proved, that to ensure the welfare and prosperity of a government, the people must in a greater or less degree, be educated; the more so the better; but millions of Egypt's children were sunk in a most deplorable ignorance, and the slaves of a most degrading superstition. The injunction of a priest, to them was a command of God, and this blind obedience to the priesthood was another cause of their final destruction.

But in all these, it must not be forgotten that over all, and directing all, was Jehovah, the God of nations. His fiat, centuries before her final overthrow, had gone forth, that Egypt should be destroyed. He it was, who permitted these elements to work together for her dissolution, and while the mighty monuments of her ancient greatness, crumbling in decay, bear witness of her glory and pride, they also attest the justice of God, the Avenger. The land of the Pyramids droops and wilts beneath the curse of

an offended Jehovah, and the Cypress weeps over her departed greatness. Ages have witnessed the zenith of her power, but eternity will behold her desolation.

G.

Editor's Table.

WE feel a strong disposition to felicitate ourself upon the fact that we have been able to furnish our number of the Lit. in such good season. Nature, as it is said, distributes her gifts among her children, so that each one has some excellencies of character peculiarly his own. Among those which have fallen to the happy lot of your humble servant the Editor, (and with all modesty we speak it), is punctuality. And we have often had occasion to reflect, from the unhappy effects consequent upon the lack of it which we have observed in the lives of others, how fortunate it was for us, that we did not receive instead of it, some more brilliant quality but one far less beneficial in its ultimate results. Let no one depreciate this element of character. Its importance even in the physical universe is very evident. What disastrous consequences might not ensue to the inhabitants of the solar system, if any of the planets like rail-road trains should happen to get behind time? and what awful discord would it make in the music of the spheres, were Saturn compelled to cry out, *Oh Jupiter hurry up the cakes!* In like manner we have often looked with sympathizing pain upon the careworn faces of those editors of the Nassau Lit. who been so unfortunate as not to have their matter ready for the press at the proper time. The innocent readers of the periodical, having no conception of the labor it cost those who have its management, never take into consideration that the editor for their sakes perils his standing in class, his character for punctuality, and most horrible of all that is horrible, his reputation for being cute if he doesn't say enough funny things, are continually thrusting at him the heart-rending soul harrowing button-hole bursting interrogatory, when's the monthly coming out? Now we, like a sensible philosopher, taking warning by the untimely fate of many of our predecessors, concluded to steer clear of the rock on which they split.

But it may be asked why was the October number published so far in advance? why not just at the proper time instead of two months sooner than was necessary? To which we reply, that it was a matter of pure disinterested self-sacrifice on the part of Editor, who was unwilling to deny to his friends even

for a short time any gratification it was in his power to give. Everybody knows that the glory of the Editor attaches to him only while his work is in prospect. During that time he walks the Campus with an imperial dignity, which prevents his being barked at by any except *very* big dogs. Seniors are quite polite to him, Juniors treat him with marked respect, and as for Sophs and Freshmen, they are confident he is to be one of the great men of the age. But so soon as he drops his mystic pen, the question coolly asked is, who is the next Editor? Now he might naturally be expected to put this period off as far as possible. Hence owing to this, and to the fact that it became necessary for us to transfer ourself to a different portion of the surface of this oblate spheroid upon which we dwell, and also that the relations of the spiritual to the material part of our nature gave evidence that the latter was not in that happy condition usually denominated health, we had the materials for a very good apology. But as it fortunately happens, none being necessary we shall make none.

The Editor is expected to do what he can towards the correction of all prevalent abuses, and especially those effecting the great interests of literature. Among the evils in the matter of college writing at the present time which cry out for a remedy, is the almost universal *tendency to gasiness*. Some few attempt to defend this on the ground that gas is one of the most useful forms of matter, that it is a most happy means of diffusing light, and that even our earth was once in a gaseous state. To this we reply that things ought always to have an adaptation to the times, and that geologically considered the age of gas is long gone by. As evidence of the lamentable extent to which this evil prevails, we give our readers the following anonymous article sent to us through the Post Office. We suspect it was written by a member of one of the under classes, but wouldn't dare say so, for fear of getting the ill will of those honorable bodies which in their collective capacities have, we think a very proper feeling of disgust for such nonsensical writing as the following:

ESSAY ON TEA-KETTLES.

The scientific, political and moral relations and bearings of the Tea-Kettle are transcendantly pre-eminent. It is true tea-kettles are not so large as steamboat boilers; but there are a great many more of them. While the latter are limited to our large rivers, the tea-kettle is found upon every hill and in every valley of the land. It inhabits the cottage of the peasant and palace of the merchant. It is heated with coal both anthracite and bituminous, as well as with hickory, oak and other kinds of wood. And it is presumed that its bearings upon the prosperity of our country and the important part it sustains in moulding the character of our people, are such as to warrant it as a subject for profound thought and philosophical disquisition.

And first with regard to the scientific bearings of the subject, it is presumed little is required to be said, as every one must perceive at a glance,

that many important principles in Natural Philosophy are applied in the proper construction of that most important utensil in domestic economy called the tea-kettle. In the selection of materials it is obviously necessary to look for such as shall have good conducting power and which shall not have such an affinity for oxygen as to unite with it at a degree of temperature lower than that required to boil water. Suppose for instance a wooden tea-kettle to be suspended over a blazing fire, and the fearful condition of things is more easily imagined than described. To think of the devouring element, as if inspired with a fiendish appetite for destruction, enveloping the innocent vessel in its livid flames, is terrible in the extreme, and calculated to send a thrill of horror to every heart. Three disastrous consequences would evidently follow; the destruction of the tea-kettle, the loss of the tea, and the putting out of the fire; and the many attendant inconveniences immediately and remotely consequent upon these, the imagination would fail to conjecture and it would weary the hand to record. Other considerations equally important are always to be taken into the account, such as where the spout is to be placed and of what shape it should be, so as to perform its own proper function, but time and space will not permit us to dwell upon them here.

The bearings of the tea-kettle upon the great political interests of the nation are so important in all points of view, that I should do the greatest injustice to my subject by omitting a notice of them. It is evident that the demand for tea-kettles gives employment to a large number of operatives engaged in their manufacture; they are thus enabled to obtain an honest living, and have therefore less temptation to acquire wealth by improper means, and having more time to devote to mental culture, are better able to distinguish their rights and duties as citizens of one great commonwealth. Moreover all must observe that the drinking of tea, very naturally suggests that memorable event in our history known as the Boston Tea Party; and what is so well calculated to inspire us with a desire to make ourselves glorious by devotion to our country, as the memory of the noble deeds performed by our ancestors? In addition to all this, the demand for tea strengthens the commercial relations between our own country and the Celestial Empire, and establishing a mutual dependence between the two nations prevents the possibility of their going to war upon trifling prettexts, and our happy land is thus saved the expenditure of a vast amount of blood and treasure; an end the attainment of which it must rejoice the heart of every true patriot to contemplate.

And lastly the moral bearings of the tea-kettle are such as to command for it our most serious regard. As we behold it hanging over the blazing fire or resting upon some red-hot stove, what a host of analogies does it suggest to our mind? The beautiful cloud of steam, which a few moments ago was probably in the form of ice, now rising most gracefully in the air and working itself into all imaginable forms of loveliness, as if it were the tiny

pavilion of some household god, and then vanishing from our view, speaks to us of the vanity of everything human, and reminds us that all things are liable to change; while on the other hand the fact that even while the water is wasting away, it gives forth its sweet music, teaches us that while we are spending our strength in the discharge of duty we should do it with a happy and rejoicing heart.

Then again the many pleasant associations it calls up before us, how delightful they are! To think how often after a day of wearisome toil we have gathered round the evening board to partake of the life giving liquid in company of those that were dear to our hearts, but who are perhaps now far from us, fills us with emotions of mingled pleasure and sadness. Then the reflection that many, very many in our much favored land are destitute of the means to procure this luxury of civilized life, some even without the blazing fire with which to prepare it, and others without those affectionate ties so necessary to its proper enjoyment, teaches us to be thankful for our own blessings, and strikes a sympathetic chord in our hearts, whose vibrations give forth the sweet music of Charity, finding its fittest expression in acts of kindness and love.

Oh Tea-Kettle, Tea-Kettle, dear to my heart,
 What a cheerful companion and solace thou art!
 Thy music enlivens my loneliest hours
 And awakens new life in my drowsiest powers.
 How oft I remember the times that are past,
 When I gathered the shavings that made thee to boil,
 And wearied with labor how happy at last
 When thy heart cheering beverage rewarded my toil!

One of the most peculiar features observable in the development of society is the variations in the standard of what is considered genuine wit. Some years ago puns and conundrums, which are now very justly regarded as grave offences against propriety, were considered as evidences of a very bright and sparkling genius. Some one who had "nothing else to do," has handed us the following representation of an imaginary conversation between a number of Seniors at that time. It will no doubt strike those now in College as a remarkably singular production.

Scene.—Room in East College—Time, eight o'clock in the evening. Actors,

Peter, Dick, Harry and Jack:

Peter.—Dick will you have a cigar?

Dick.—No, I should prefer a *river gar* to a *sea gar*.

Harry.—Sugar is much the sweeter.

Jack.—I am afraid however that one who is fond of *shoe-gar*, is likely to become a *boot-lick*, a character which above all others, I detest.

Peter.—You gentlemen must be Knights of the *Garter*.

Harry.—Well I don't pretend to say how that is, but Sis asked me once

to present her with a *night-hood* which she might wear when making winter-evening's calls.

Dick.—And were you so *hood-winked* as to her object that you couldn't respond with an *aye*?

Harry.—No, I had my *eyes* open, which by the way was a very important item as I conceive.

Jack.—That reminds me of what Prof. — says about regarding the Earth as one grand individual whole, because if the earth is an *individual* it must see through its *eye-lands*, (islands).

Harry.—Well for my part I think the learned Prof. is incorrect when he considers the earth as one individual, because a river as all must know, is a peculiar kind of snake with *mouth* at one and *head* at the other. Still more the Earth must be an infant upon the breast of its mother the Ocean; for the *bosom* of the Ocean is always on the *face* of the Earth.

Dick.—According to some Metaphysicians that is case of *relative suggestion*.

Harry.—And Europe must be an individual of itself having legs of extraordinary dimensions, as a large chain of mountains in it is usually called the *pair o' knees* (Pyrenees).

Jack.—Beg your pardon gentlemen for changing the subject, but why does the Capital of Ireland grow faster than any other city?

Harry.—That question is too deep for us. Why does she?

Jack.—Because she's *doublin'* (Dublin) every day.

Peter.—Since you are in mathematics, I will mention a question proposed by a departed Senior. Why is Prof. Alexander's Astronomy like a kiss? and the answer, because its *printed* not *published*.

Dick.—Very good thing Sir, a very good thing. I suppose also a kiss is mathematical because its *6 tips*?

Harry.—That is an *abstract question*.

Dick.—Another case of *relative suggestion*, as a kiss always suggests the idea of getting a wife.

Peter.—That also an *internal suggestion*, if love has its seat in the heart.

Harry.—Then at marriage we have the subjective and the objective united.

Jack.—This seems to be a *point of inflection* as regards the lady's name. While a maiden she is usually known as the Queen of Spain, as everybody says she is a *belle* (Isabel).

Jack.—It is now regarded as an *axiom* that she was good metal, coming as she did from Castile, (cast-steel).

Peter.—Wonder if she did not usually become surfeited at dinner, as she was fond of eating a *good eel*, (good deal).

Harry.—Why since you are speaking of *certainties*, she was Sir fitted all the time after her marriage to Ferdinand.

Peter.—Mirabile dictu, what a cute!

Dick.—Ha! another case of *relative suggestion*, Marry Billy Richard too.

Jack.—And Oh Hurry Billy Richard too, (horibile dictu).

Harry.—Yes for if you don't you'll get Latin at a great rate.

Dick.—You mean *late in*?

Harry.—They haven't got the tin to lay. Therefore they will be foiled, and we may say tin-foiled.

Peter.—Then we shall have tin-foil without the tin.

Dick.—According to metaphysics that the *abstract idea* of the thing.

Jack.—According to mathematics it is an *imaginary quantity*.

Harry.—According to Whately it's a Disjunctive Hypothetical with the Major false.

Dick.—According to Dutch it *ish nicht*.

Happy indeed it is for us that such a perverted taste no longer exists. We can now have wit and humor without puns and conundrums, and Editors whose minds should be devoted to better purposes, are saved the trouble of racking their brains in order to conjure them up.

DEAR READER: The time has come for us to bid you *adieu*. After remarking the important fact, that had the Art of Printing not been invented when it was, we should not have been able to furnish our number so soon, we present it to you with our best wishes for your future. Our feelings like those of the most persons on such an occasion being too deep for utterance, we arise, make our best editorial bow and retire from the chair in silence, with a blessing upon its future occupants.

Yours, &c.,

EDITOR.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are greatly obliged to our friends for their favors. Several pieces some of considerable merit were necessarily excluded for want of room.

EXCHANGES RECEIVED.—Yale Literary, William's Quarterly, Amherst Collegiate and Georgia University Magazines, Erskine Collegiate Recorder, Southern Rights Advocate, Monthly Jubilee and Ladies Christian Annual.